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CLAIMS:

5 1. A television schedule system configured with an electronic program guide (EPG) database, the system comprising:
a receiving location for receiving a plurality of regularly scrambled television channels and a plurality of regularly unscrambled television channels; and

10 a processor for maintaining the EPG database with program listings for a plurality of the regularly unscrambled television channels, the processor further updating the EPG database for a program listing of a program transmitted without scrambling on one of the regularly scrambled television channels.

15 2. The system of claim 1, wherein updating the EPG database includes turning on one of the regularly scrambled television channels which is now unscrambled, for displaying program listings of the program transmitted on the now unscrambled channel.

20 3. The system of claim 1, wherein updating the EPG database includes adding the program listing of the program transmitted without scrambling into the database.

25 4. The system of claim 1, further comprising a detector coupled to the processor for detecting whether one of the regularly scrambled television channels is now unscrambled.

30 5. The system of claim 4, wherein the processor updates the EPG database based on the output of the detector.

35 6. The system of claim 1, wherein the processor receives data from a service provider indicating the periods during which one of the regularly scrambled television channels will be unscrambled.

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7. The system of claim 1 further comprising a display for displaying a portion of the EPG database in a guide format.

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8. The system of claim 7, wherein the display further displays a promotional message in the guide for informing a viewer that one of the regularly scrambled television channels is now unscrambled.

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9. The system of claim 8, wherein the promotional message is visually distinguished from the program listings of programs transmitted on one or more of the regularly unscrambled television channels.

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10. The system of claim 8, wherein the portion of the EPG database including a program listing of a program transmitted without scrambling on one of the regularly scrambled television channels is displayed upon user selection of the promotional message.

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11. The system of claim 1, wherein the processor further adds one of the regularly scrambled television channels into a list of displayed channels.

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12. The system of claim 1, wherein the processor further transmits an order to subscribe the television system with a service provider of one of the regularly scrambled television channels.

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